

*THE TORPEDO INCIDENT  
AT EAGLE BEACH IN ARUBA*



**Adolf (Dufi) Kock**

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**Author**  
**Adolf (Dufi) Kock**

**On the occasion of the commemoration of the**  
**70<sup>th</sup> year of Aruba's involvement in WWII**

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### **Special Dedication**

Special thanks to the following persons for their help before and throughout this book.



Mr. Jos Rozenburg (1960) has been flying and sailing around the islands for many years. As a naval officer in the Royal Netherlands Navy he served on maritime patrol aircraft and frigates that were used to guard and protect the Antillean jewels in the Caribbean Sea. From 2005 to 2008 he lived in Curacao with his family and became involved in research concerning the history of the islands in World War II. Since then he continued his efforts to contribute to the knowledge of this part of our collective history.



Mr. Edric Croes, born in 1980. Has a B.A. degree graduate in History at the University of Rotterdam, Holland. He is presently employed at the Archivo Nacional di Aruba (A.N.A.) as a researcher. From January 2009 to September 2010 he established an inventory filing system of all documents and other information on the history of Aruba during the Second World War. Since September 2010 he is working on Aruba's Status Aparte.

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## **Introduction**

On the morning of February 17, 1942, an enormous explosion near the Eagle refinery shattered the fragile nerves of the population of the island of Aruba, the beautiful and peaceful gem of the Caribbean. Aruba was drawn into the merciless claws of the Second World War. With unbelieving eyes the Arubans watched the Nazi submarine U-156 attack two unsuspecting oil tankers close to their shore and turn them into deadly infernos. Sailing for thousands of miles from her home base in occupied France, Kapitän-leutnant Werner Hartenstein then tried to attack the Lago refinery with grenades from the deck gun. Later he fired torpedoes at another tanker lying near the Eagle refinery, and unknowingly left a torpedo on the pristine white beach.

This fascinating tale tells the story of a Nazi torpedo on an Aruban beach. It provides the details of all the characters and circumstances that played a role in this event, that would turn out to be a drama. Based on original pictures that were taken when the events unfolded, and testimony from the people who were there when it happened. The information in this story is supported by official statements from the authorities.

In February 1942, global war invaded Aruba. The island would never be the same afterwards. You are invited to share the experience, the fear, the anger, and the despair. The hope and the bravery of individuals, qualified Aruba to survive this bitter test and it emerged victorious, prouder and stronger than before.

## **Attack on the *Arkansas***

*Arkansas*, an American steam tanker (6,452 BRT), was built in November 1919 as *Aryan* by Texas Steamship Company, Bath ME and owned by the Texas Company (Texaco) in Wilmington, DE. In 1940 it was renamed as *Arkansas* for the

same owner. It was finally broken up at Faslane, Scotland in December 1953.

On January 13, 1942, it weighed anchor in Santos, Brazil and headed to Aruba empty of cargo. It was under the command of Master Karl Karlson.

After the torpedoing and shelling of the tankers and the Lago refinery on that early morning of February 16, 1942, Captain Werner Hartenstein headed his submarine U-156 to the Eagle Pier where the Texaco Company tanker *Arkansas* had been observed the previous night. Three torpedoes were fired on the *Arkansas* by the submarine. Studies made by my colleagues Willem Donck and Jos Rozenburg of the Netherlands concluded the following:

That according to the firing report of the U-156, and the map with the torpedo course and the position of the *Arkansas*, the first two shots were fired from the bow tubes. The third shot was fired from the stern tube. It explains the fact that Hartenstein states in the log that he turned the boat for the third shot.

Knowing that torpedo 3 was a hit, it seems to follow from the map that torpedo 1 missed the *Arkansas* and continued a straight line and ended up on the beach. This was the first torpedo to wind up on shore in the Western Hemisphere during the Second World War. That leaves torpedo 2, which must have had a failure in her propulsion system of some sort while being on the way towards the *Arkansas*. This must have happened before the end-of-run destruction switch was armed, so it did not explode when the torpedo stopped. The conclusion is that this un-detonated torpedo is in the half track distance between the U-156 firing position and the *Arkansas*. After firing the third torpedo the U-156 broke off the attack due to an aircraft alarm and left the area in a northerly direction heading for the island of Martinique.

According to Mr. Jos Rozenburg, of the Ministry of Defense in the Netherlands, and who is doing extensive investigation on the war history of Aruba, the German submarines had a torpedo setting which allowed them to fire a torpedo, which would then turn to a different attack heading in steps of 10 degrees (the Germans call it "Lage 0, Lage 10, Lage 20, etc."). This allowed them to fire at different ships in quick successions without having to turn the submarine for each shot. But, with a single target and dead in the water (speed 0) like the *Arkansas*, it made no sense to use this setting. In this case you point the submarine as you would point a gun, and fire straight at the target. It improves your chances on a hit and it is obvious that Hartenstein did it this way:

0316, torpedo 1, course of U-156 54 degrees, course of torpedo 66 degrees, distance 550 yards landed on the beach.  
0330, torpedo 2, course of U-156 29 degrees, course of torpedo 29 degrees, distance 550 yards landed into the ocean.

0343, torpedo 3, course of U-156 190 degrees, course of torpedo 11 degrees, distance 750 yards, hit *Arkansas*.

The unarmed *Arkansas* (Master Karl Karlson) was struck on the starboard side between the #4 and #5 bunkers. The ship had arrived that day from a dry dock in the States. Her tanks were still gas free. It was awaiting a safety inspection before receiving a cargo. The explosive created a large hole and smaller holes at the port side, causing extensive structural damage. According to John C. Every who was in charge of the Oil Inspection Laboratory at the Eagle refinery at that time, the captain of the ship was on the bridge when the torpedo struck the ship. He was bounced around but suffered no serious injuries. No one else was injured. Because the ship was gas free there was no explosion other than that of the torpedo itself. The crew of eight officers and twenty-nine crewmen remained on the vessel and later walked down to the dock. Three hours later the crew re-boarded her to access the damage. On February 18<sup>th</sup>, the tanker was moved from the Eagle Pier to a Lago repair

facility where it was temporarily repaired in order to depart to a U.S. port. On March 18, 1942, she arrived under her own power at Galveston, Texas, where she was overhauled before returning to service.

### **The Beached Torpedo**

The German electrically powered torpedo, model G7e, which landed on the Eagle beach in Aruba on February 16, 1942, was the first German missile of this war to land on the soil of the Western Hemisphere. It landed near the saltwater pump of the Eagle refinery on the beach. It was found the next morning, February 17, 1942 by Sergeant John Arlington Sloterdijk in the presence of 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenants Karel J. van Meeteren and Johann Conradd Oduber from the Savaneta Camp. U.S. Captain, Robert Bruskin and a Dutch military personnel inspected it later in the day and it was immediately decided to have it disarmed. In order to do this, it was necessary to get help from Curacao, where there were experts in this type of work. Military personnel Antonius Jacobus Johannes Klein, Vogelesang, and military Bruno Bremer departed Savaneta Camp in a truck that same morning and picked up 2<sup>nd</sup> Class Lieutenant Pieter Joosse and Sergeant-Major Dirk Adriaan C. de Maagd at the airport, who had flown from Curacao early in the morning. All five drove in the truck to Eagle Beach. After arriving there, the explosive head of the torpedo was removed from the body by unscrewing four bolts. A rope was attached to the body and to the truck and the two parts were separated. Then the truck towed the body approximately 40 meters away.

Joosse tried to blow up the explosive head with a stick of dynamite, but when the charge went off, the head did not explode. Several things happened simultaneously. The five went to the torpedo head to inspect what had gone wrong. Another marine who had watch duty on the Eagle Pier, Marine Leonardus Kooijman got curious and left his guardpost. He joined the group around the head to watch.

At the same moment Military Jacobo Kock arrived in a car with a message from Marine Captain van der Spek (Executive Officer Savaneta) for Lieutenant Joosse. He too joined the group around the explosive head. The message was to request the Dutch demolition team to wait for the U.S. Navy demolition team to arrive before they tried to disarm the torpedo. Due to a misunderstanding this did not happen.

So, at this moment we have Joosse, de Maagd, Klein, Vogelesang and Bremer (the official team members). Kooijman (the guard at Eagle Pier) and Kock (delivering a message) near the head. Joosse decided to remove the pistol from within the head before they would try again to blow it up. He specifically wanted to pull it out because they didn't have one like that in Curacao. He attached a metal wire to it and then to the rope. The minute the group walked away to go to the truck and pull out the part, the head blew up without warning. The time was 10:45 in the morning.

Mr. Romulo J. Franken, Infantry Corporal at the Savaneta Camp said that he had just arrived at the spot to tell the commander that he had to return to Curacao to get more instructions. Mr. Franken said: "I arrived at the south gate at Eagle and I saw Bruno Bremer underneath a pipe and Jacobo Kock was close to the beach and then I heard a loud explosion. When the people from Oranjestad saw all these soldiers near the beach, quite a few came to look what was going on. Fortunately, they were not allowed to come too close."

De Maagd, Vogelesang, and Kooijman were killed instantly while Joosse was severely injured and died of his wounds later that day at the San Pedro Hospital. Marine Klein suffered wounds to the head and had a concussion. Military members Kock and Bremer had no visual wounds, but also had concussions. All three were taken to San Pedro Hospital to be treated. The body of the torpedo survived the explosion and was removed later that day by military

personnel and taken to the Savaneta Camp. Joosse had a photo camera with him and had made pictures. The camera was recovered and the photos developed. They were attached to the original incident report in 1942. Two of his pictures and six others taken by the Military Police after the explosion, are in the National Archive in The Hague. It feels strange to look at pictures of a torpedo which were taken by the man who was killed by the same torpedo a short time later. Images of a grim and sad morning on a sandy beach in tranquil Aruba.

Mr. Cerapio Thielman, from the military at the Savaneta Camp said that later on they brought the 18-foot torpedo to the Savaneta Camp. It had 30 batteries, and with lots of firing instructions on it.

What happened to the salvaged back part of the torpedo? According to Jos Rozenburg, the Dutch artillery ship Hr. Ms. Van Kinsbergen was ordered from Willemstad, Curacao to Oranjestad, Aruba on March 23, 1942. After arrival of the ship her 7.5cm gun turret was removed to be delivered to the Eagle refinery. The authorities were aware that the 19.2cm battery at the Juana Morto at Lago Heights could not protect the Eagle refinery against attack from the sea. Therefore, they chose the fastest solution for this problem, which was to use the main gun from the Van Kinsbergen. When the ship returned to Curacao, she took with her the recovered part of the torpedo from U-156. The military authorities in Willemstad wanted to investigate the torpedo at the torpedo maintenance shop in the Waterfort. The big question remains as to what they did with it afterwards. Until today, this remains an unknown.

### **Report by H. Oppenhuizen**

In an official report of February 23, 1942, Sergeant-Major-Instructor, H. Oppenhuizen relates the accident of February 17, 1942 in Aruba:



Relative to the accident in Aruba on February 17, 1942 with the disarming of a torpedo on the beach at the Arend Petroleum Maatschappij have I, H. Oppenhuizen, Sergeant-Major-Instructor of the Military Police Troops, in accordance with an assignment, started an investigation.

Approximately at 10:45am on the afore-mentioned date I was in the Police station in Oranjestad. Just then I heard a loud explosion of which the sound came from the direction of the Arend Petroleum Maatschappij. Although the disarming of the torpedo was not officially known, it was immediately suspected that the explosion came from there.

I immediately went by car, accompanied by Police-Sergeant, B. Martensen, to the location where the torpedo was. Upon arrival there, I observed that there had been an accident as they were busy putting several of the injured on stretchers, after which they were taken by military trucks to the San Pedro Hospital in Oranjestad. Upon arrival of the injured at the hospital medical examination showed that three persons were already dead. These were: (1) de Maagd, Dirk Adriaan Cornelius, born in Tholen, Holland on September 15, 1894, Sergeant-Major-Torpedomaker, living in Curacao; (2) Vogelesang, Johannes, born in Dordrecht, Holland, on November 18, 1916, 3<sup>rd</sup> Class Military, living in Aruba; and (3) Kooijman, Leonardus, born in 's-Gravenhage on March 3, 1917, 1<sup>st</sup> Class Military, living at the Savaneta Camp in Aruba.

The fourth severely injured appeared to be the 2<sup>nd</sup> Class Lieutenant, Pieter Joosse, born in Arnhem, Holland on December 31, 1912, living at Waterfort, Curacao. Unfortunately, after an operation at the hospital, he died at 3 o'clock in the afternoon on that same date, without regaining consciousness.

The non-perilous injured persons were: (1) Klein, Antonius Jacobus Johannes, 25 years old, 2<sup>nd</sup> Class Military, living at the Savaneta Camp in Aruba; (2) Bremer, Bruno, born in

Aruba on October 6, 1922, Military, living at the Savaneta Camp in Aruba; (3) Kock, Jacobus, born in Aruba on May 28, 1922, Military, also living at the Savaneta Camp in Aruba. These last three persons remained in the San Pedro Hospital in Oranjestad for treatment and observation.

(Author's Note: The only injured on whom I have more information and photos to date is Jacobo Kock. Jacobo was born in Aruba on May 28, 1922, son of Antonio Kock and Regina Kock. He was married to Mathilda Paesch, born in Aruba on April 25, 1924, daughter of Paul Paesch and Demeta Jansen. Jacobo died on July 18, 2000 and was buried on July 21, 2000 at the San Nicolas cemetery. Mathilda is still alive and lives at Caya Jose Geermanstraat #32 in San Nicolas, Aruba.)

At the location of the accident several people who were present handed me a pocketbook and various papers. These seemed to belong to Lieutenant Joosse based on the contents. These papers, accompanied with a statement, through an intervention of the Detachment Commander, was handed to the local Military Commander in Aruba. A copy of the statement is enclosed with this report.

Upon my arrival at the accident scene, I observed:

At the location, where the head of the torpedo exploded, the sand was a turmoil, splinters or metal parts, descended from the head. A thick rope was lying on the ground at the seaside, which ran from a distance of 100 meters to where a truck stood at the end. The rope and the truck belonged to the Arend Petroleum Maatschappij which was loaned to Lieutenant Joosse. The back end of the torpedo, which was separated from the head before the accident, stood approximately forty-three meters west and approximately thirty-five meters landwards from the location where the explosion took place. The back end of the torpedo was in the direction of the land.

Six survey recordings were made by Police Inspector, J. van Driel, one day after the accident, which will be sent along with this report. As witness I listened to:

Bronkhuyzen, Albertus born in Leiden, Holland on November 20, 1899, Director of the Arend Petroleum Maatschappij and living at Arend-Camp in Aruba. He declared the following to me:

"On February 17, 1942, at approximately a quarter after ten in the morning, I was in the company of Lieutenant Joosse near the pump-station of the Arend Petroleum Maatschappij approximately 100 meters from the stranded torpedo. By that time they had already separated the head from the body, while the back end was towed to the beach with a rope and by a truck belonging to the Arend Petroleum Maatschappij. When I approached the lieutenant, I asked him if the explosion of the torpedo would cause any danger to the tanks. He told me that there would not be. We sat behind some bushes and saw that the lieutenant was busy taking some records.

At a certain moment I heard an explosion of the dynamite, which was placed previously underneath the head of the torpedo. This explosion was not that powerful and the lieutenant informed me that it was not satisfactory. We then went to the unexploded head of the torpedo, which as a result of the explosion, came closer to the beach and was being washed with the incoming waves. Everyone gathered at the head. I presume that we were eight standing there and the lieutenant asked the sergeant-major what should be done. The sergeant-major suggested that it be rolled into the sea. The lieutenant spoke of a pistol which they did not have in Curacao. This he would like to remove from the head. He asked me if I had a wire cable for him whereby he could make an attempt to pull out the pistol from the head by means of a rope and a truck. I asked him what could happen as a result of this, he told me that the head could explode, but this was not certain. I had therefore sent for a wire cable

and the men fastened it at the front part of the head of the torpedo.

Meanwhile there were some curious onlookers who came onto the premises and who, in my estimate, were too close. I went to them and moved them, while I went to a safer distance myself. Owing to the distance where I was standing and due to the beach being lower than the ground, I could not see the progress of the work being done. When the men were apparently ready, I saw them come to the top of the hill. They stood there to watch. At that moment the head suddenly exploded with a terrible force. I fell flat on the ground, to watch the result. Subsequently, I saw the victims scattered on the ground. One military member, who was injured on his head (Klein) came to me and asked me if he was seriously injured. I told him that he was not but he must go lie on the ground. I immediately sent for help and also stretchers. The victims were then sent to the San Pedro Hospital.

After the explosion a camera was found in the vicinity which belonged to lieutenant Joosse, which I kept. By this means I am transferring the camera to you." (I, with my name and address, take the responsibility of this camera).

After reading this as witness of this report it is duly signed.  
H. Oppenhuizen.

I hereby declare that I have received the camera, which had a little dent and a film in it, which I handed to Police Inspector, J. Van Driel to develop the film. It appears that three photographs were taken. Two of these had good exposures and were sent along with this report. The three negatives and the camera were also included. I was also handed the piece of wire cable which was tied to the head of the torpedo, by Mr. Leonardus Kortekaas, Manager of the Arend Petroleum Maatschappij garage. This piece of wire cable will accompany this report which will serve as to where it belongs.

(Author's Note: The photos taken by this camera are saved at the National Archive in The Hague, Holland. The body of the torpedo was saved at one time in Savaneta Camp but later it was moved.)

Here follows an interview of February 18, 1942, by Oppenhuizen in the San Pedro Hospital:

Klein, Antonius Jacobus Johannes, born on July 15, 1916 in Rotterdam, Holland, 2<sup>nd</sup> Class Military, birth certificate No. 4649. He declared to me as follows: "On February 17, 1942, before noon I informed the crew who would be helping with the disarming of the beached torpedo at the Eagle Beach. The crew consisted of: Militaries Vogelesang and I, and the military Bremer, who was a truck driver. When we went to the airport, we picked up Lieutenant Joosse and Sergeant-major de Maagd and we went straight to Eagle. When we arrived there, we first dug up a hole underneath the head of the torpedo. Lieutenant Joosse immediately prepared a dynamite stick and fastened it to the cover. After this was ready, military members de Maagd and Vogelesang loosened the bolts. Immediately when this was prepared, the head of the torpedo was moved to the terrain by a truck and a long rope. Then the dynamite was placed underneath by the lieutenant, which he already had prepared. A five-meter fuse was fastened. He then ignited the fuse. We immediately ran in different directions. The lieutenant went in the direction of the water pumps and then took pictures. Military Vogelesang also took a picture of the lieutenant at the torpedo. After five minutes that the fuse was lit, I heard a small explosion of the dynamite, which had been placed underneath the head.

After the explosion we all went to look at the head and I saw that the head moved just a little to the seaside. At that moment I saw Military Kooijman who was on watch at the Eagle Pier near the beach coming to us and asked us what was going on, which I told him. Lieutenant Joosse asked us for a wire cable, which was obtained from the nearby truck.

They wanted to pull the pistol from the head. When the cable was brought to us, Sergeant-major de Maagd said: "Why does he need that cable?" I also heard him say: "What is he going to do with such a piece of copper?"

The military Vogelezang came walking with a piece of wire cable, which he gave to the lieutenant. It was a piece of approximately two meters long, with a knot on each side. The lieutenant gave the cable to the sergeant-major, which was fastened to the front end of the head with the help of Vogelezang, behind the four protruding knives. The knot had to be bent open. The other end of the cable was previously fastened. When this was finished, the lieutenant exchanged some words with the sergeant-major. What they said I don't know, but I assume that the lieutenant made a joke to the sergeant-major and said: "Stay until this thing is pulled", whereas the sergeant-major said: "Not me".

We wanted to move further away, The sergeant-major grabbed his shoes which he had previously taken off. He followed me. All of a sudden there was a terrible explosion whereby I was thrown to the ground. When I got up, I noticed that I was injured on my head. Further on I saw several others lying on the ground. I was transported to the hospital. I can further declare that before they started the disarming, I saw that the underside of the head had a dent a little over half the length of the head and over the complete width. The pistol was pushed inside on the underside. I saw four knives pointing out of the pistol, extending outside, which were movable to the back. The highest knife had a red line running across the whole length which ran over the pistol. In front of the head of the pistol was a propeller with two blades, among which was a red blade pointing to the top with the number 150.

The military Kock came to the location in Captain van der Spek's car with a message for lieutenant Joosse to tell him that he must first go see Captain van der Spek before the commencement. I presume that the lieutenant did not

understand the military. I explained the message to him and the lieutenant said: "that I did not understand". After having read this report of the witness, he signed: Antonius Jacobus Johannes Klein, 2<sup>nd</sup> Class Military.

The tail end of the torpedo was taken care of by Plaatselijk Militair Commandant and sent to another location. This report was made under oath, to be sent to the Plaatselijk Militair Commandant in Aruba, where it belongs.

Oranjestad, February 23, 1942  
Sergeant-Major-Instructor  
H. Oppenhuizen (Signature)

### **San Pedro Hospital**

At the beginning of the Second World War, the San Pedro Hospital in Oranjestad was prepared itself for any calamity. With the blackout period, forty kerosene lamps, flashlights, and gasoline lamps were assigned to the operating room. The street lanterns were adjusted at the top so that the light directly shone downwards. When the electric lights were switched on and off five times, "phase B" would automatically switch on the lanterns and all the outside lights would dim.

On the night of February 15, 1942, the air-raid alarm sounded. "There were submarines in the vicinity and they have caused a nasty situation close to San Nicolas". At 7:00am, early the next morning, two trucks arrived with nineteen men on the hospital grounds. The men were black from head to toe from the raw petroleum and some had severe burns. An English man and a Chinese were already succumbed and arrived at the hospital covered with a canvas to the hospital. They were sailors from the torpedoed tankers.

The next day, February 17, 1942, there was the accident with the disarming of the beached torpedo at Eagle beach.

A little later seven trucks came in, each with a stretcher carrying injured. Three militaries died on the spot, namely: Dirk Adriaan Cornelis de Maagd; Johannes Vogelezang; and Leonardus Kooijman.

Another officer, Pieter Joosse, 2<sup>nd</sup> Class Lieutenant at Sea, born on December 31, 1912 in Arnhem, The Netherlands, was seriously injured. He was still alive, but with lots of splintered steel wires penetrated in his flesh. The doctors tried to remove the splinters to try to save his life, but with no luck. After an operation, he died at 3:00pm. There were also three other injured who were local militaries: Bruno Bremer, Jacobo Kock, and Antonius Jacobus Johannes Klein who received head concussion and loss of hearing. Mr. Bremer was severely injured and remained in coma for one month. He was taken to Venezuela for further medical attention. On February 20, 1942, the four brave Dutch soldiers were buried at the Oranjestad cemetery in Aruba with full military honors.

In early 1998, fiftysix years later, commissioned by the General Prins (CZMCARIB) in Curacao, Fleet Chaplain, Frans (F.A.M.) Kerklaan was asked to get a funeral home to exhume the remains to be sent to the Netherlands. Mr. Kerklaan was not in favor of this decision because he felt that they should remain in Aruba. Apparently Pieter Joosse's brother insisted that his brother be transferred to the Netherlands. The War Grave Foundation then decided that the remains of all four victims be sent to the Netherlands. This was also based on their efforts to transport as many war victims as possible to the Netherlands to centralize long term cost savings.

On May 6, 1998, Frans M. Kerklaan, Vlootaalmoezenier of the Savaneta Camp sent a letter to Yolanda Wever of the Momentomori Funeral Home at Arendstraat 105 in Oranjestad, Aruba with a list of five Dutch war victims whom the Dutch War Graves Foundation had the intention of



reburying in Holland. Here follow the names and the cemeteries where they were buried in Aruba:

*Protestant Cemetery, Boerhavestraat, Oranjestad:*

1. Name: **van Eijk. Benedictus**  
Rank: EO Hr. Ms. Katendrecht  
Date of birth: January 18, 1897  
Date of death: June 27, 1941
2. Name: **de Maagd, Dirk A.C.**  
Rank: MJR. Torpedomaker  
Date of birth: September 15, 1894  
Place of birth: Tholen, The Netherlands  
Date of death: February 17, 1942
3. Name: **Joosse, Pieter**  
Rank: LTZ 2 KMR  
Date of birth: December 31, 1912  
Place of birth: Arnhem, The Netherlands  
Date of death: February 17, 1942

*Catholic Cemetery, Boerhavestraat, Oranjestad:*

4. Name: **Vogelezang, Johannes**  
Rank: MARNALG 3  
Date of birth: November 18, 1916  
Place of birth: Dordrecht, The Netherlands  
Date of death: February 17, 1942
5. Name: **Kooijman, Leonardus**  
Rank: MARNALG 1  
Date of birth: March 3, 1916  
Date of death: February 17, 1942

Mr. Kerklaan requested the costs relative to the reburial, taking into account the following:

- A. Digging of the remains.

- B. Another casket to transport the remains of the deceased.
- C. The closing of the old grave.
- D. The destruction of the stones.

Momentomori funeral home, assisted by militaries from the Savaneta Camp, dug up the bodies. Then the funeral home prepared and put them into two boxes and shipped them to the Netherlands.

On May 29, 1999, their remains were sent to the Netherlands. They were re-buried at the Dutch Field of Honor, Loenen in Apeldoorn, The Netherlands. Kooijman, Vogelesang, Joosse, and De Maagd are at Plot A, graves 653, 654, 655, and 656, respectively.

The following is an inventory list of goods found on February 17, 1942 at the explosion site at Arend Petroleum Maatschappij. A wallet with its contents:

- . Nine banknotes of Fls.10.00
- . Three lottery tickets of the Prins Bernard Committee, Curacao, numbered 9250, 9201, and 9244 (drawing of March 31, 1942).
- . A pocketbook
- . A report of an out-of-order bomb.
- . Further some receipts, letters, and airline tickets.

Based on the contents, it appeared that everything belonged to Lieutenant Joosse, except for one airline ticket.

Oranjestad, February 20, 1942  
De S.M.I. Brigade-Commandant  
H. Oppenhuizen (Signature)

### **Monument Dedicated to the Four Militaries**

On November 21, 2009, Dick de Bruin, Toine van der Klooster, and Andre Loonstra, diving team members of the SS Oranjestad Memorial Committee with the help of Gregory

Paesch, Edward Yarzagaray and others salvaged an anchor close to the Eagle beach to install it as a monument in honor of these four Dutch militaries at the Savaneta Camp in Aruba.

On February 20, 2010, Dufi Kock, president of this committee, in an official ceremony, donated the anchor to Commandant Edwin Hofma of the Savaneta Camp. It was installed in the Camp in the presence of Aruba's Prime Minister Mr. Mike Eman, dignitaries, dive team members, and invited guests. According to Commandant Hofma, the monument will be placed outside of the main entrance in the future.

### **Searching For Family Members**

Willem Donck looked for the families of the four Dutch victims who died of the torpedo accident at the Eagle Beach and found out that Pieter Joosse had one brother. This brother visited the grave in Aruba in 1967. Unfortunately, he passed away in 2008. Willem has been in contact with his wife. Because she met her husband after the war she had never known Pieter. She also told Willem that she and her husband had visited the grave in Aruba in 1986. Because of the poor state the grave was in, they contacted the Dutch Wargraves Foundation to have Pieter Joosse and the other men repatriated and reburied in Holland at the Dutch War Cemetery in Loenen. Willem told her about the anchor monument at the Savaneta Camp in Aruba and she said she was sure her late husband would have loved it. In 2010 relatives of the three other men, known to the Dutch Wargraves Foundation, were contacted about the installation of the anchor monument at the Savaneta Camp. Because of privacy regulations their identities are not revealed by the foundation.

### **Searching For Lost Torpedo**

Between October 4–7, 2011, Hr. Ms. Pelikaan captained by Commander LTZ 1 Marten Veenstra came to Aruba to search for torpedo 2 which was fired by the German U-boat U-156 on February 16, 1942 and landed into the ocean. Their mission was to salvage the torpedo, take it out into the deep, dynamite it and turn over the part of the body to the respective authorities.

Hr. Ms. Pelikaan A-804 is a Navy auxiliary vessel which is stationed in Willemstad, Curacao. Among other tasks, it supports operations and exercises of the Netherlands Antilles and Aruban militaries and Coast guards. During weeks 41-43 part of a Navy demolition team which is on board have been doing exercise and training in the Caribbean region. The group consists of Commander LTZ 1 Will Meurer and his nine divers.

Several people in Holland (Dick de Bruin, Jos Rozenburg, and Willem Donck) and in Aruba (Dufi Kock and Alfredo Pichardo) are investigating the events that took place in Aruba during the Second World War. In an e-mail exchange some months ago when the events concerning the SS Arkansas were discovered, Stan Norcom provided us with valuable information such as the Kriegs Tage Buch (warlog) of the U-156 as well as map of the Eagle Pier from 1931. (Mr. Norcom is an ex-resident of the Lago Colony and who wrote a book on U-156, Beginning to Das Ende in 2008.) With this information and other supporting documents we were able to make a viable reconstruction of the Arkansas attack and therewith make an assessment where the missing torpedo might be. Back then it was already suggested by some that a search should be undertaken for the missing torpedo.

As some members of the group have direct links with the Royal Netherlands Navy we had been able to present the case of the missing torpedo to the demolition team of the Royal Netherlands Navy. Based on the documents that were

handed to them the decision was taken and use the last four days of their exercise to search for the missing torpedo in front of the Eagle Beach in Aruba supported by the Navy vessel Hr. Ms. Pelikaan and using the underwater robot (REMUS).

Despite all the efforts of the demolition team and their divers, the missing torpedo was not located. There is a strong possibility that in the last 70 years the torpedo could have been displaced significantly due to strong currents. After four days the demolition team ended their search. Although the torpedo was not discovered we think that this search, and the (even somewhat disappointing) results added another chapter to the "Neuland/Aruba" story. In addition to that Commander Meurer assured us that this project is not over yet. He will be back with 45 divers and allot more time in their searching efforts.

If the torpedo is still in shallow waters, it remains a danger to recreational divers if they ever stumble over it and hamper with it without realizing the danger. If it is ever found, our advise is to get people specialized in these matters to disarm it.

### **Note by the Author**

Johann Conradd Oduber, better known as Johnny, who together with Messrs. Sloterdijk and van Meeteren found the beached torpedo, was born in Aruba on November 3, 1922. On June 9, 2011 Johnny passed away at the age of 89 years. He left to mourn his wife Maria Telma Suitbertha Lacle and eight children. He was buried on June 13, 2011, at the Roman Catholic cemetery in Oranjestad.

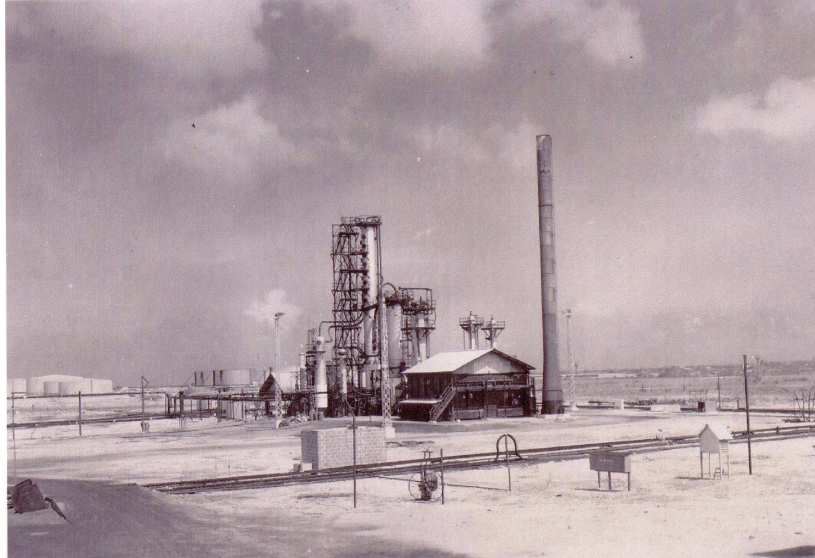
Torpedoes are represented with a three character model G7e or G7a to identify the torpedo type. All WWII torpedoes used the model "G" followed by a number identifying its length (5 or 7 meters), and the final letter identified the propulsion method (a = steam; e = electric).

According to a document at the archive in The Hague, in 1939 the Artillery Committee for the 19.2cm battery at Juana Morto referred to its location as Pedro Mosa to indicate the high ground to the north of the Lago refinery.

**THE END**

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The Eagle Refinery  
(Refineria di Eagle)

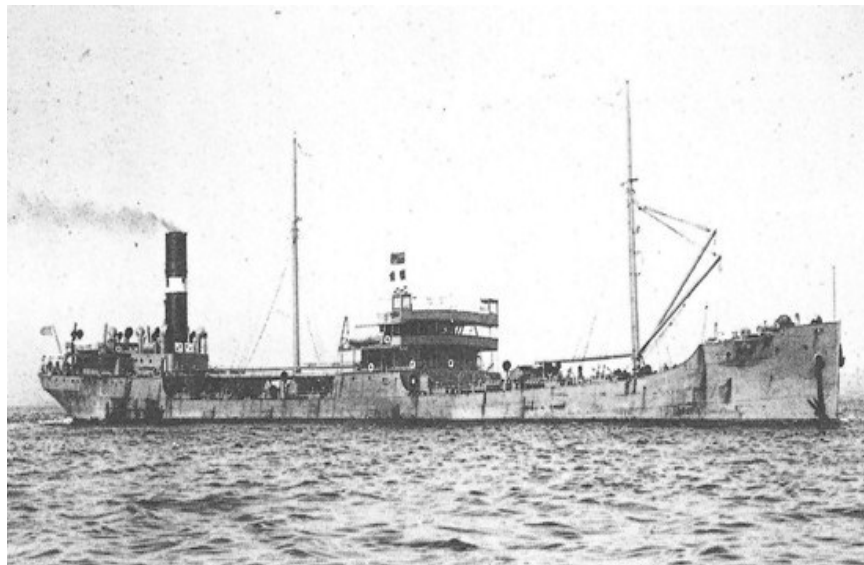


The Taratata and the Eagle refinery pier  
(Waf di Taratata y di e refineria di Eagle)





German submarine U-156  
(Submarino Aleman U-156)



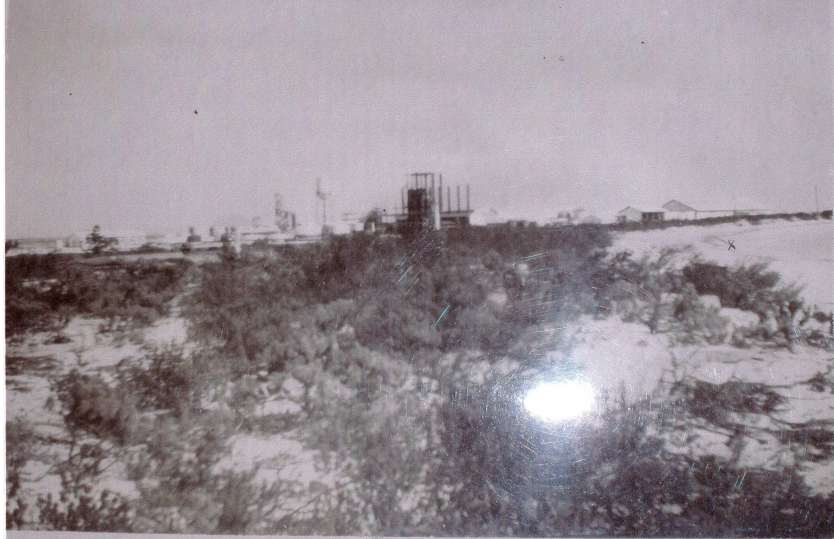
S.S. Arkansas



Inspecting the beached torpedo  
(Inspeccionando e torpedo riba beach)



Soldier guarding the torpedo  
(Solda cuidando e torpedo)



Sun shining on stranded torpedo  
(Solo briyando riba e torpedo)



Head of torpedo still intact  
(Cabes di e torpedo ainda intacto)





Sun shining on torpedo in front of the refinery  
(Solo briyando riba e torpedo dilanti di e refinaria)



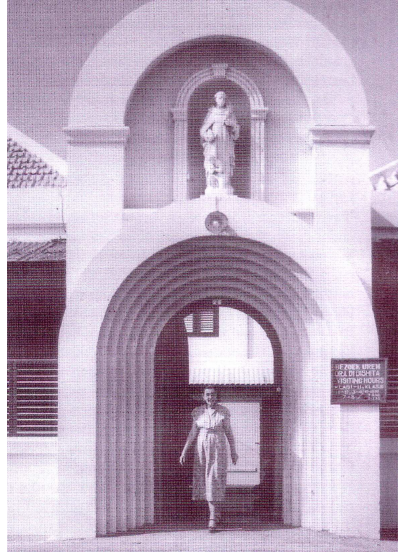
Tail end of the torpedo  
(Parti patras di e torpedo)



Remains after head exploded  
(E resto despues cu e cabes a explota)



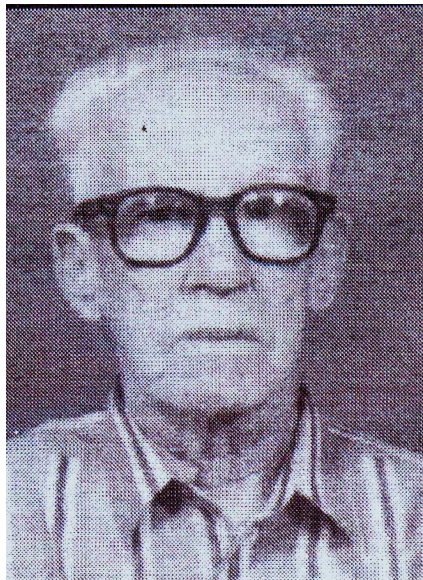
Another view of what's left after head exploded  
(Un otro bista di e resto despues cu e cabes a explota)



San Pedro Hospital



LTZ 2 KMR Pieter Joosse



Soldier Jacobo Kock  
(Schutter Jacobo Kock)





Protestant Cemetery in Oranjestad, Aruba  
(Santana Protestant na Oranjestad, Aruba)



Catholic Cemetery in Oranjestad, Aruba  
(Santana Catolico na Oranjestad, Aruba)



Cemetery at Loenen, Appeldoorn, Holland  
(Santana na Loenen, Appeldoorn, Hulanda)





Grave of Dirk A.C. de Maagd in Holland  
(Graf di Dirk A.C. de Maagd na Hulanda)



Grave of Pieter Joosse in Holland  
(Graf di Pieter Joosse na Hulanda)



Grave of Leonardus Kooijman in Holland  
(Graf di Leonardus Kooijman na Hulanda)



Grave of Johannes Vogelesang in Holland  
(Graf di Johannes Vogelesang na Hulanda)



Diving team with anchor monument  
(Ekipo di sambuyado cu e monumento di e anker)



Commandant Hofma, Prime Minister Mr. Mike Eman  
(Comandante Hofma cu Prome Ministro Mr. Mike Eman)





Hr. Ms. Pelikaan



Searching for the lost torpedo  
(Buscando e torpedo perdi)

### **Historical Edition**

This historical edition is a publication which focuses on the incident which occurred when Dutch militaries tried to disarm a torpedo which was fired on the Texaco tanker *Arkansas* by the German submarine U-156 on February 16, 1942. The vessel was tied up at the Eagle pier. It was in this area that the U-156 fired three torpedoes and one landed unexploded on the beach.

The torpedo was discovered early the next morning. A request was sent to Curacao to send a Dutch demolition team to disarm it. Several things went wrong simultaneously when it was being disarmed, resulting in the deaths of four Dutch militaries and injuries to three local militaries.

Aruba played an important role during the Second World War and in general there is a need for us to further accumulate important information in order to have a complete historical documentation of Aruba's involvement and what it meant to Aruba. It is of vital importance for us to leave our histories as complete as possible for the future generation. The more we neglect this, the less we can offer our youngsters of tomorrow.

**xxxxxxxxxx XX xxxxxxxxxxxx**

Adolf (Dufi) Kock, after having worked at the Lago refinery for 35 years and also at several hotels, decided to dedicate his time in community work and investigate the history of Aruba and The Second World War. He has four other books published.

No. 1 Guia Con Pa Solicita Pa Un Trabou

No. 2 Fecha y Datonan Historico Di Aruba

No. 3 History of a Classic Car

No. 4 Historia di Savaneta